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soil of the Exploring Islands is similar to that of Lakemba; Totoya, Moala, and Matuka are the most fruitful of all.

The inhabitants of Lau may best be described as a cross between the negroid Fijian and the Polynesian. Their hair ranges from fuzzy to wavy,

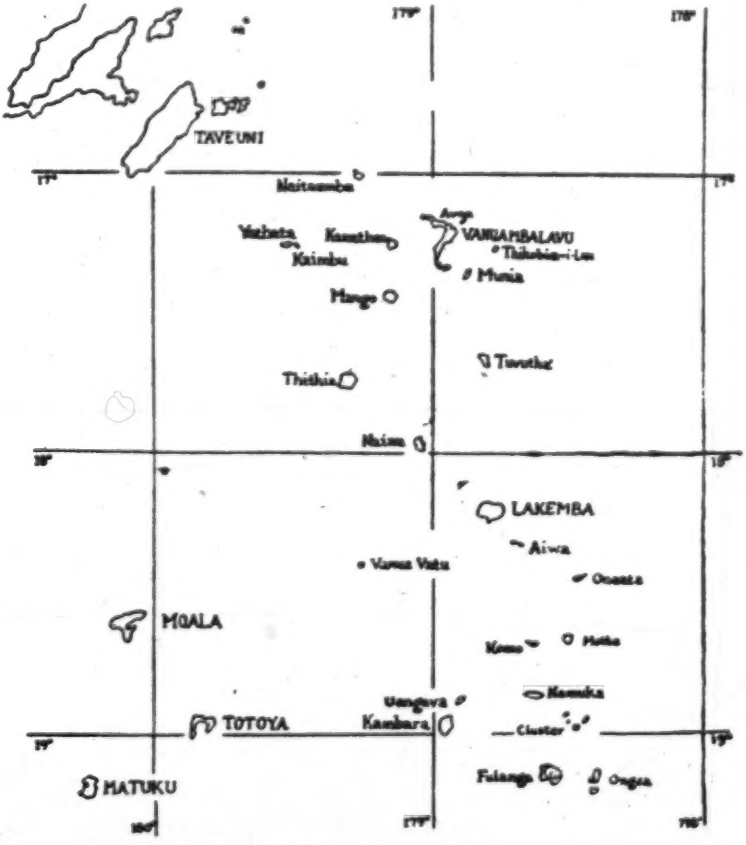

FIGURE 1.—Map of Lau.

or even straight, but curly hair is probably the most common. Many of them have eyes with a slight Mongolian appearance. Their speech is softer and more sing-song than that of people further west. They pronounce *ti* like *chi* and *ndi* as *nji*, and have many words peculiarly their own.

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the sea; then the crying of the children and the cutting of firewood is allowed. The Rasau returns to Lomaloma.

MUALEVU

The dialect of Mualevu is that of Thakaundrove. Some clans drop the *k*, or rather reduce it to a glottal stop. They say *thawa 'ila;* the others say *thawa kila.*

In precedence the villages rank as follows: Mualevu, Mavana, Ndalithoni alias Ndāku perhaps comes third, then perhaps Avea, then Muamua, Thikobia (Thikombia-i-Lau), Mboitathi. The people of Avea formerly lived in the island of Munia which was sold to white men. Munia was noble of old; the chiefs sprang from there. There was one branch of nobles in Mualevu; but it declined and a branch of nobles from Munia was set up instead.

The old name of the village of Mualevu was Yaro. The clans are described as follows:

> Mualevu, the clan of the high chief (Sau). Lomati are like Mualevu; they are nobles but are not appointed high chiefs. They are Envoys to Thakaundrove, and the title of their chief is Ratu Mataki, "Sir-Envoy-to"; Likusongea are envoys to Lomaloma. Nautu are the tribe of Tui Yaro; formerly they were noble, but once they cooked turtle in Vatuvula and the chief of Mualevu was angry and smote them and so they declined until the present day. In those days the tribe of Tui Yaro kept "the cloth of the land".
>
> Nayanggona are heralds; Nalawa, Natuvu, Wailailai, Nambureto, Nandave are plain clans.
>
> The *tama* salutation used by the men of Mualevu is *"mai o!"*; by the women *"mai na vakandua!"* The chiefs of Mualevu are called Tui Mavana. The present one is called only Sau; he has not yet been installed as Tui Mavana.

It is said that Mavana was the chief village of old, but Mualevu beat them. There are facts which point that way: all the old things such as the fish caught in nets (*ika tanga*) are in Mavana, none in Mualevu; all state ceremonial (*ka vakaturanga*) emerges from Mavana; the frontiers of Mavana come very close to Mualevu; there is a passage called the Mavana passage. Another informant says it was the chief village until beaten by Ndaku who gave the title of Tui Mavana to Mualevu.

The people of Mavana come to install the Tui Mavana, which is done as follows:

> All the people assemble with a feast and pile it up in the village Green. The chief with the herald comes and sits down. All the people have retired to the bush, and no beating of bark cloth is allowed. The people of Mavana prepare the kava of the Chief (*yanggona ni tu*) on the village Green. From the time they prepare to squeeze it it is forbidden for any one to come that way, or he will be fined. Men stand with clubs and mount guard: there is not an installation ceremony at which this is not done. While the kava is being made ready, the cloth of the land is tied on the chief's right arm.

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PRONUNCIATION OF WORDS FOUND IN THIS BOOK.

THE Fijian language, subject to dialect variations, is now used throughout the Lau Islands; though probably in ancient times Southern Lau, at all events, used a language much more akin to modern Tongan. 197

The orthography is that used when the spoken words were first reduced to writing by the earliest Missionaries, some of whom were skilled philologists, about eighty years ago. They found that there were certain sounds for which we have no corresponding letters in the English alphabet, and after many experiments they decided that the best results were to be obtained, and the necessity of introducing additional letters avoided, by giving an entirely new sound to certain of the letters of our own alphabet that could best be spared. Thus Q is made to represent a sound half-way between NG (hard) and NK; and C is made use of to represent TH (hard). 104 [197]

Just as a white man finds it difficult to pronounce the peculiar clicks that occur in a Zulu's 104 194

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language, so do the Fijians find it difficult to pronounce certain sounds, such as B and D, without the conjunction of other sounds with them. Thus, wherever a B is written down in a Fijian word an imaginary M must be understood to precede it, and similarly an imaginary N precedes both the written D and also the G (the G in Fijian being very nasal and almost inaudible). Therefore DEGEI, the Serpent God, is pronounced as if spelt in English as NDENGEI (nasal G), and BEQA, an island, is pronounced as if spelt MBENGA (hard G).

Vowels have the French sound, and so the diphthong AU in LAU is pronounced ah-oo, which quickly run together eventually comes almost to rhyme with cow.

Accentuation is, as in Hebrew, nearly always on the penultimate syllable.

T. R. St. J.